



## Saddle Up... Tonight We Ride

*"I'm singing the song in my head."* - Cassie Joan Daigle, age 5

Not long ago, my youngest daughter demanded a quarter to feed a nearby gumball machine. I replied that a quarter could be earned with a rendition of the "Daddy Song," a song that proclaims the greatness of its composer. The song is never sung without inducement or bribe. Knowing my daughter's fondness for bubblegum, I waited. Hearing nothing, I prompted Cassie and was informed that she was "singing the song in her head." It's painful to be outwitted by a five-year-old.

It's been a great ride; my family has thoroughly enjoyed its Army experience. Soon I'll exchange BDUs for civilian attire, and I look forward to the future. I'll be singing the Army song in my head. This is my final column, so I claim editor's privilege and will pontificate before hitting the release point.

**Have Fun!** Certainly, ours is a serious profession, but it is also a profession blessed with some truly funny people and characters. Is there anything more miserable than a leader absent a sense of humor? Nothing is more treasured in trying times than humor; it makes life more livable and tough experiences conquerable.

**You aren't special; eschew the perks and privileges!** Staying in the guest house when your soldiers are sleeping outside sends a message; sharing their hardships when you can sleep in comfort sends an equally powerful message. I knew a Brigade Three who drove around in a jeep sans doors even in winter rotations at Graf and Hohenfels. Most thought him touched in the head. I asked him what provoked his strange behavior; why not enjoy his vehicle's heater? The shivering major replied that it was his way of determining just how cold we were in our turrets and on the ground.

Along those lines, I suggest treating people with respect no matter the rank. A previous editor said it best, "Basic

human dignity should not be a function of the design one bears upon his collar." When asked what he looked for in potential hires, a CEO said that he sought a person who treated the receptionist with the same courtesy and respect that he extended to the CEO. Not a bad criterion for determining whom you want on your team.

**Don't Neglect the Home Team!** Sergeant Major of the Army or general officer are worthy goals, but not at the expense of one's family. There is no way around unaccompanied tours, deployments, CTC trips, etc.; it goes with wearing the tree suit. However, it should not be an "either/or situation." Strike a balance and stay involved with the family. Wait until retirement before investing in these relationships and it may be too late.

My departure has spurred a bailout of sorts. Jon Clemens, our managing editor, is also retiring. His departure marks the end of an era. *ARMOR* has been molded, shaped, and assembled under his deft hand for over 17 years. Jon has forgotten more about editing than I or any other editor before me knows. This skilled journalist, writer, and editor has mentored many, myself included, in the job of editor. Jon says his own goodbye later. Readers and staff will miss him — fair winds and following seas, Jon.

Additionally, Rex Awesome is calling it quits. I'm not sure if the decision was voluntary or one imposed by a legal authority (probably the latter). Awesome is not sure where he will land. I've seen his resume and, based on that, I'd guess Bar Bouncer or Pornographic Film Star. I offer him the podium for last words:

**Rex Speaks:** I can't stand it! "Have fun," "Remember the family," what kind of crap is that? I can say "Bye" in less than ten words: See ya' on the high ground, bring some beer! Rex, out!

That said, I wish you all good luck, saddle up.

— D2

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